

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS
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Opening Statement

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Mr. Chairman, thank you for calling this important hearing regarding America's relationship with the Asia-Pacific region. I am delighted to welcome Assistant Secretary Campbell to the subcommittee. Mr. Chairman, I recall with fondness the special relationship that we had with Chris Hill, the former Assistant Secretary for Asia, when he held the same position. I sincerely hope that Mr. Campbell will work with us in a similar fashion during his tenure as the Administration's top Asia manager.

The Asia-Pacific region is one of the most important areas of the world for the United States. Maintaining good relations in Asia are important not only for geopolitical reasons but it is vital for economic, trade, and jobs-related purposes as well. According to the East West Center, Asia accounts for 27 percent of total export-related jobs in America. Given the fact that America's export sector accounts for almost 40 percent of total gross domestic product it is vital that we get our relationship with Asia right. The congressional district that I have the honor to represent depends heavily on exports and foreign direct investment to maintain the jobs we desperately need.

I commend the Administration for generally doing a good job at managing broader U.S.-Asia relations. The Administration's focus on Southeast Asia, in particular, is a step in the right direction. However, with regard to Burma, China, and Japan, I believe the record is mixed at best. The Administration needs to be tougher on Burma and scrap its misplaced efforts to "engage" the military junta. Burma's conviction of Nyi Nyi Aung, an American citizen, on trumped up political charges is the largest example for why we need to end this pointless engagement exercise. Burma will not change regardless of how much we want it to.

The Administration needs to act more assertively with Beijing to ensure that America's interests are not negatively impacted. China continues with its "business as usual" attitude when it comes to important issues such as currency manipulation, intellectual property rights violations, and lack of religious freedom. Despite the Administration's efforts to reset relations with China it is clear that the leaders of China care more about protecting their country's own interests than to

forge a new relationship. The cyber attack on Google is a perfect example of this relationship imbalance.

With regard to Japan, the Administration must act quickly to clearly lay out the long-term ramifications of protracted uncertainty on basing in Okinawa. I strongly encourage the Administration to make it crystal clear to the Japanese Government that Congress expects it to honor a preexisting agreement.

Mr. Chairman, thank you for calling this hearing. I look forward to hearing from our distinguished witness.